

North Carolina's

Ecosystem Enhancement Program

a new approach to mitigation

Presented to:

NCDOT Environmental Planning and Policy Committee

February 5, 2003



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Outline

Update on EEP
Project pursuits
Near term board requests



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The EEP is

- Developed through partnership between NCDENR, NCDOT and USACE
- Designed to improve effectiveness of the compensatory mitigation



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Our Joint Objective

The State of North Carolina in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans to radically alter the way compensatory mitigation is provided for unavoidable impacts.



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We intend to . . .

Create a North Carolina DENR Division with a sole mission to preserve, protect enhance, and restore important natural areas and improve our water quality within our State.



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We intend to. . .

- provide programmatic mitigation
- at a watershed scale
- with functional replacement for unavoidable impacts
- years in advance of project impact
- enhance the environment in doing so.



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The Reason. . .

- Reduce project delays through environmental streamlining
- Provide better quality mitigation with enhanced success



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Total Improvement Process *an interagency partnership*



Mitigation Redesign



NEPA/404 Merger Redesign

NCDOT NCDCM NCDWQ NCWRC NCMF USACE EPA USFWS



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How EEP is Different?

• Today

- Project by project mitigation (limited success)
- Replacement of impacts on an acre or linear foot basis
- **Reactive** mitigation
- **High Cost of mitigation**
 - ▬ Late Development and Implementation
- Delayed Lettings due to mitigation uncertainties

• Tomorrow

- Program-focused mitigation (watershed)
- Replacement of impacts based on functional losses
- **Proactive** Mitigation
- **More Cost-Effective**
 - ▬ Up-Front Mitigation
 - ▬ Lower Mitigation Ratios
- **More Predictability Letting**



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Timing

EEP fully operational by 2005



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Funding

- Through project impacts
- A secondary source through traditional payments systems under the NC WRP program.



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Activities

- MOA
- Organization staffing plan
- Forming key committees
 - Liaison committee
 - Technical advisor committee
- Developing new programs for interim needs



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Implementation Plan

- Transition period will have two types of program needs
 - Restoration
 - High quality preservation and conservation



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We are presently

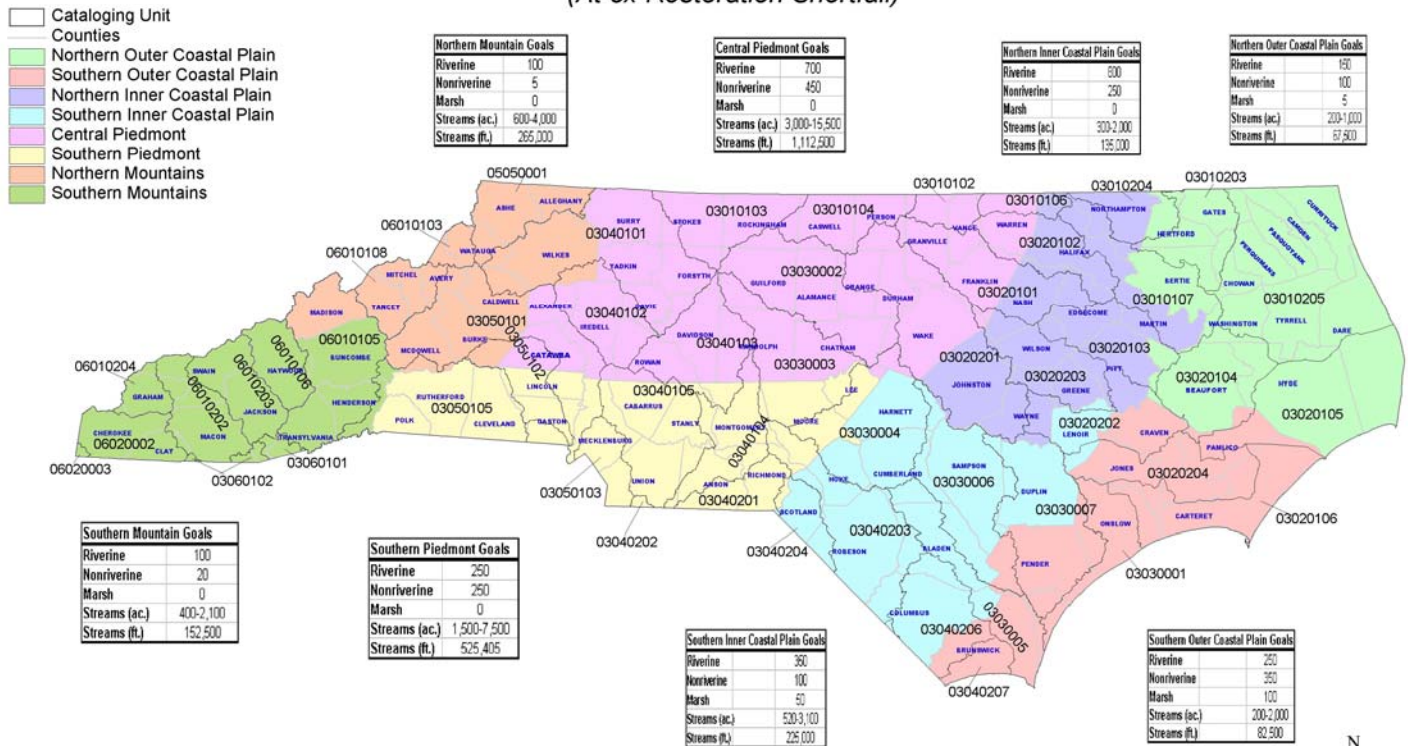
- Continuing restoration programs
- Developing increased preservation and enhancement programs for high quality wetland and stream systems



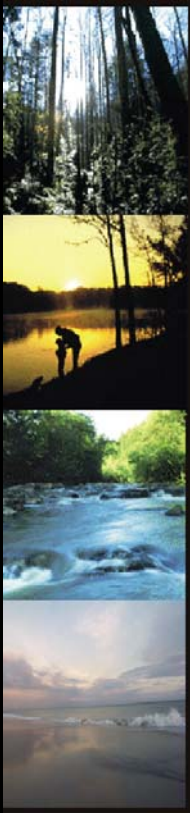
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Preservation Needs

Ecosystem Enhancement Program Transition Preservation Pursuits (At 5x Restoration Shortfall)



Working Copy as of 11/11/02



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Certain projects under consideration

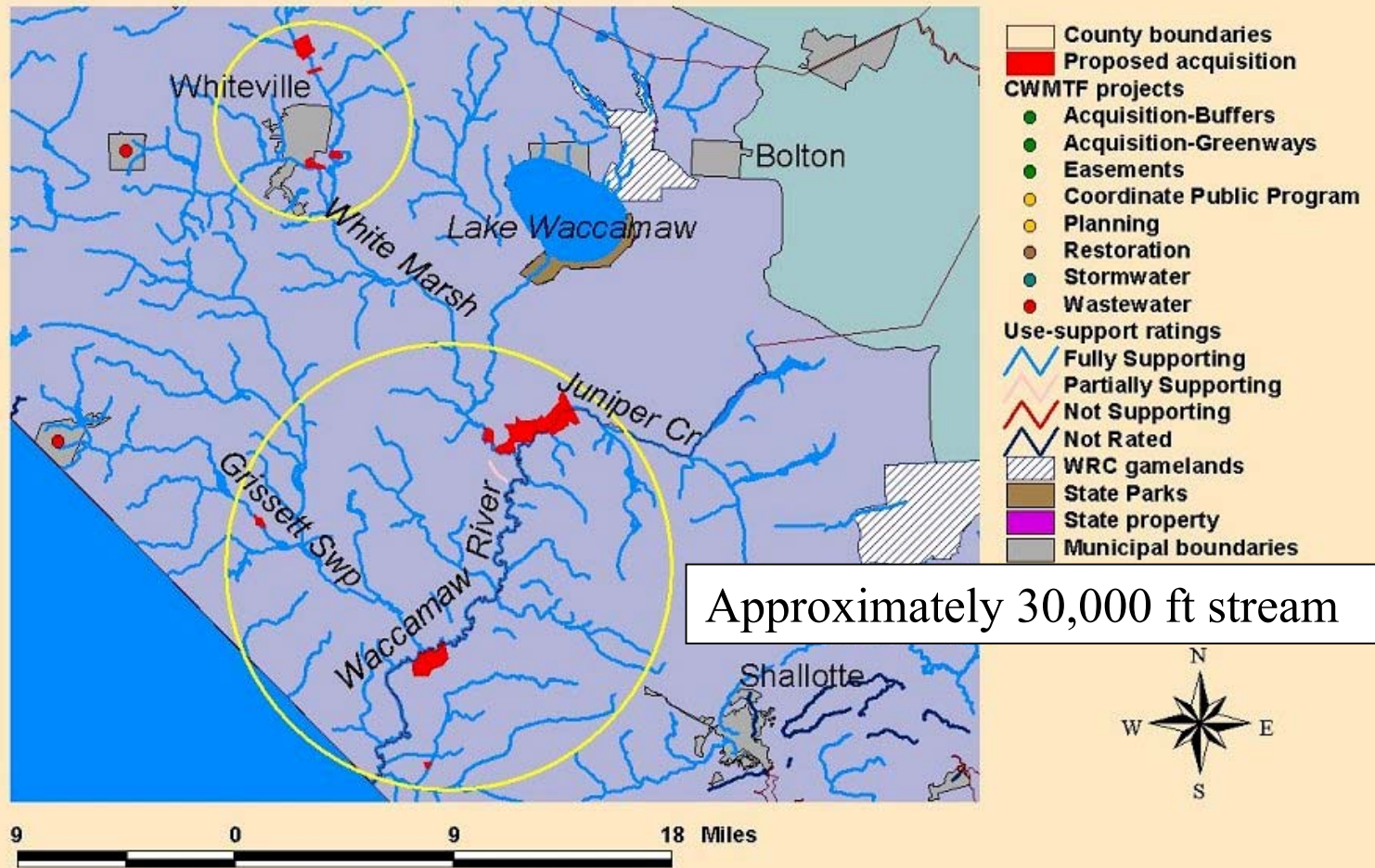


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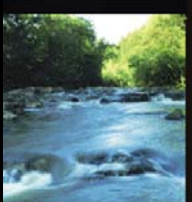


The Nature Conservancy - 2000B-007

Lumber River Basin Columbus/Brunswick



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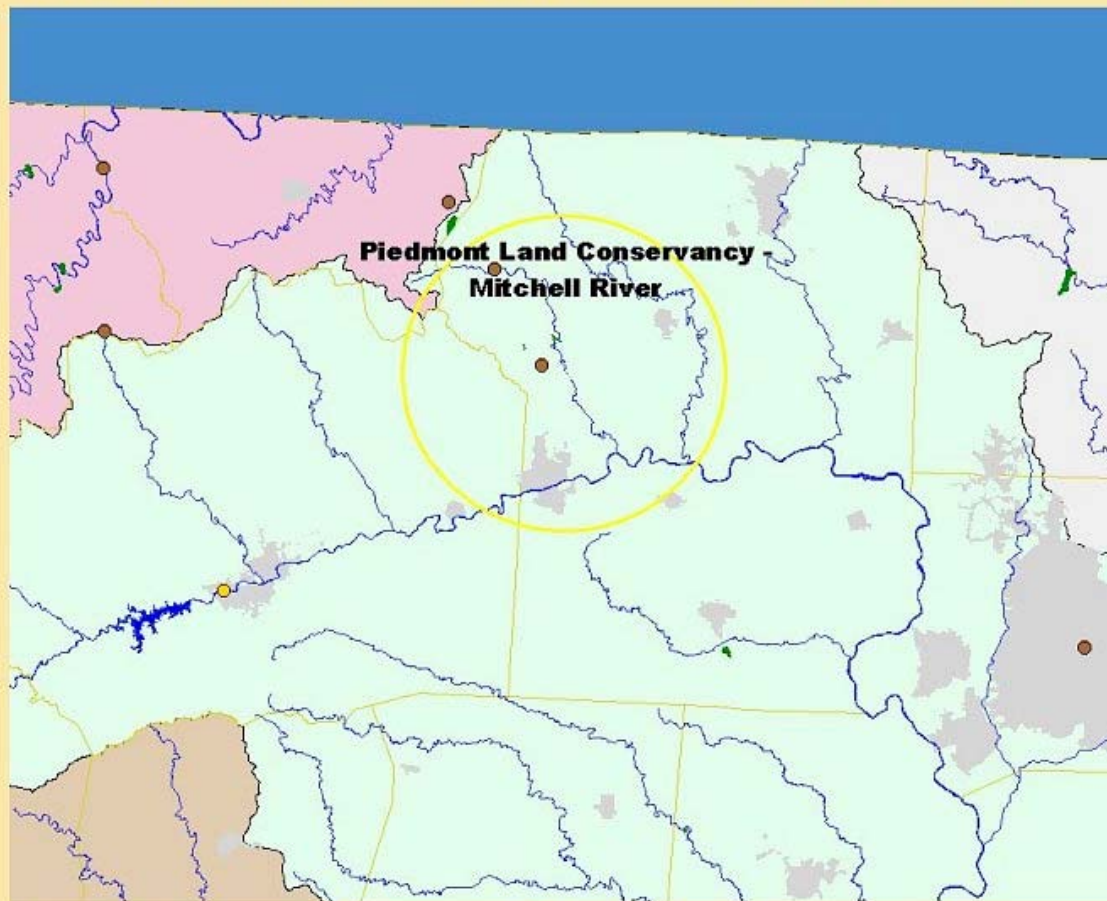
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Piedmont Land Conservancy Yadkin River Basin 2001B-044

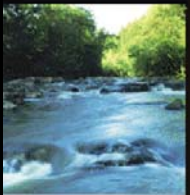
Surry



- Proposed acquisition
- CWMTF projects by purpose
 - Coordinate Public Program
 - Planning
 - Restoration
 - Stormwater
 - Wastewater
- CWMTF land acquisition project
- Major hydrography
- Municipal boundaries
- County boundaries



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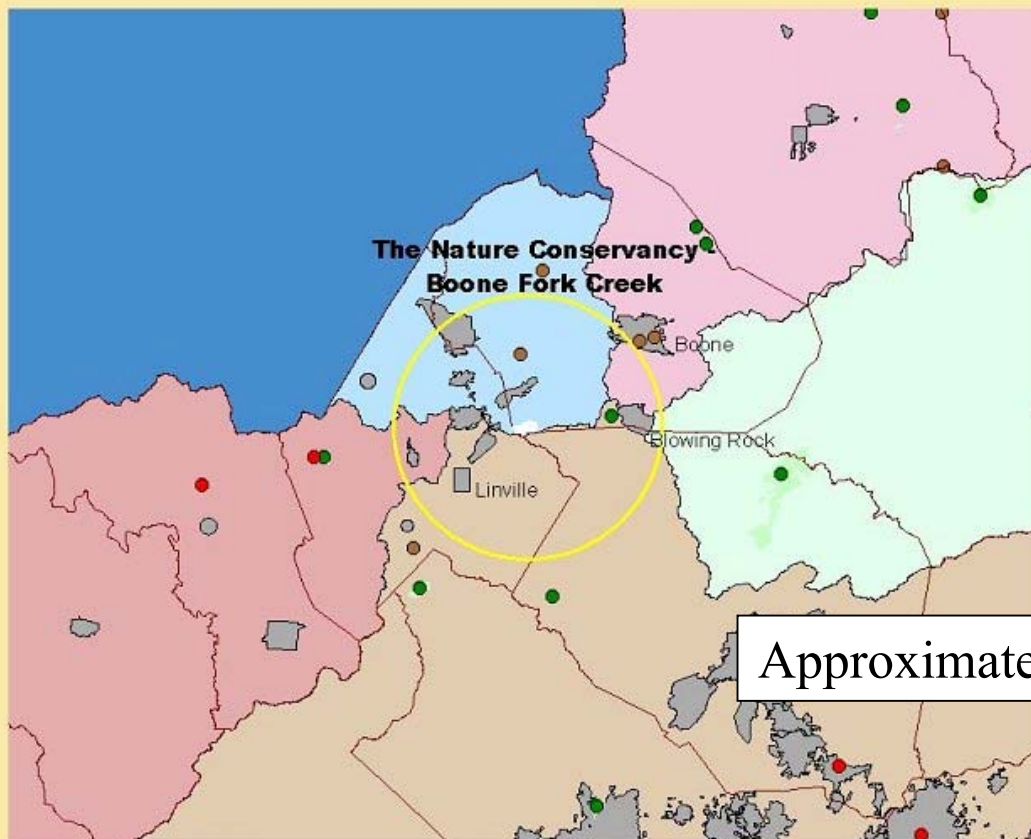
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The Nature Conservancy - 2002A-017

Watauga River Basin

Boone Fork



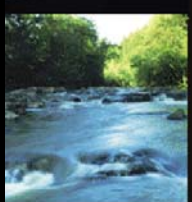
- Proposed acquisition
- County boundaries
- Clean Water Management Trust Fund
- Acquisition-Buffers
- Acquisition-Greenways
- Easements
- Coordinate Public Program
- Planning
- Restoration
- Stormwater
- Wastewater
- CWMTF properties
- Municipal boundaries

Approximately 6293 ft stream

0 20 Miles

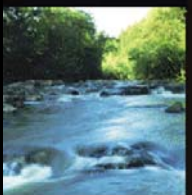


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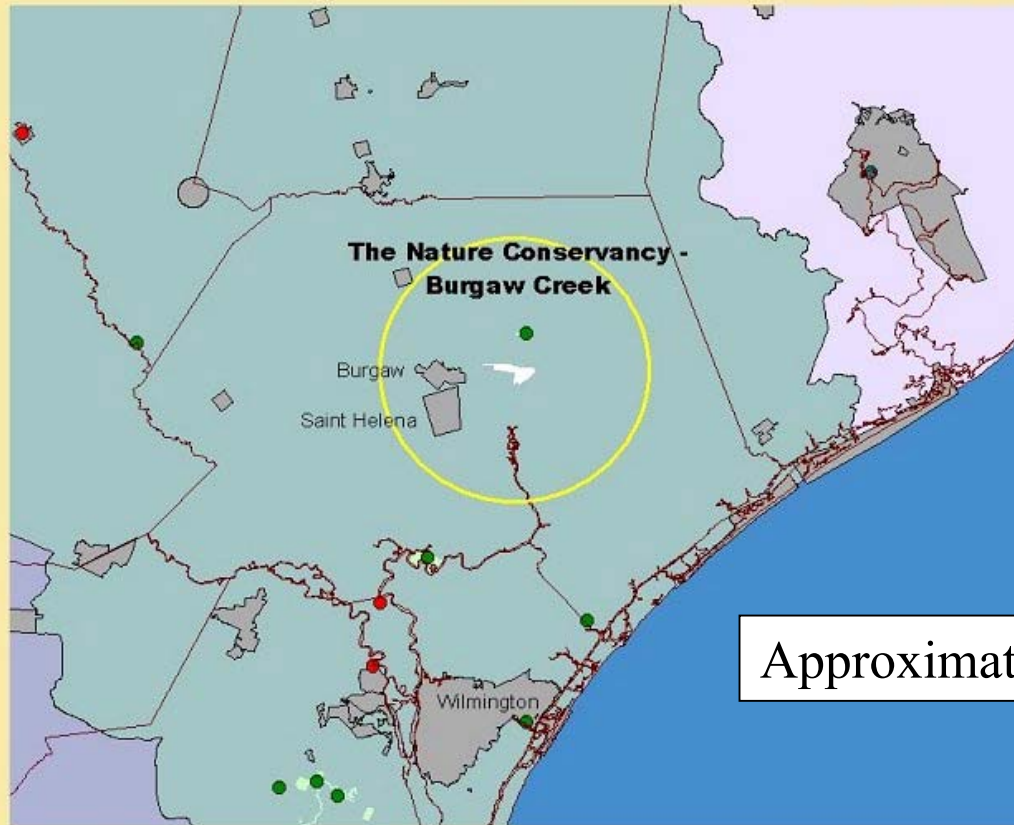




The Nature Conservancy - 2002A-018

Cape Fear River Basin

Pender



- Proposed acquisition
- County boundaries
- Clean Water Management Trust Fund
 - Acquisition-Buffers
 - Acquisition-Greenways
 - Easements
 - Coordinate Public Program
 - Planning
 - Restoration
 - Stormwater
 - Wastewater
- CWMTF properties
- Municipal boundaries

Approximately 6562 ft stream



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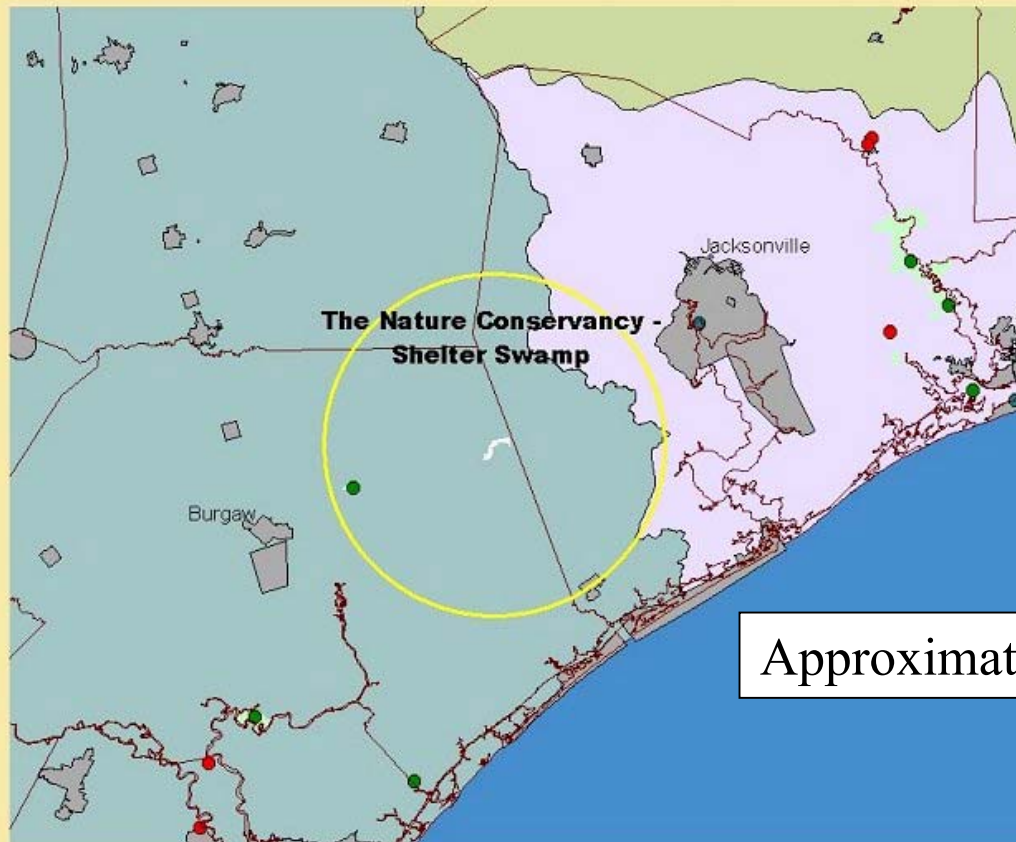




The Nature Conservancy - 2002A-019

Cape Fear River Basin

Pender/Onslow



- Proposed acquisition
- County boundaries
- Clean Water Management Trust Fund
- Acquisition-Buffers
- Acquisition-Greenways
- Easements
- Coordinate Public Program
- Planning
- Restoration
- Stormwater
- Wastewater
- CWMTF properties
- Municipal boundaries

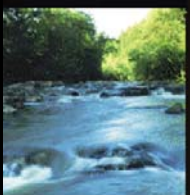
Approximately 14,852 ft stream



0 20 Miles



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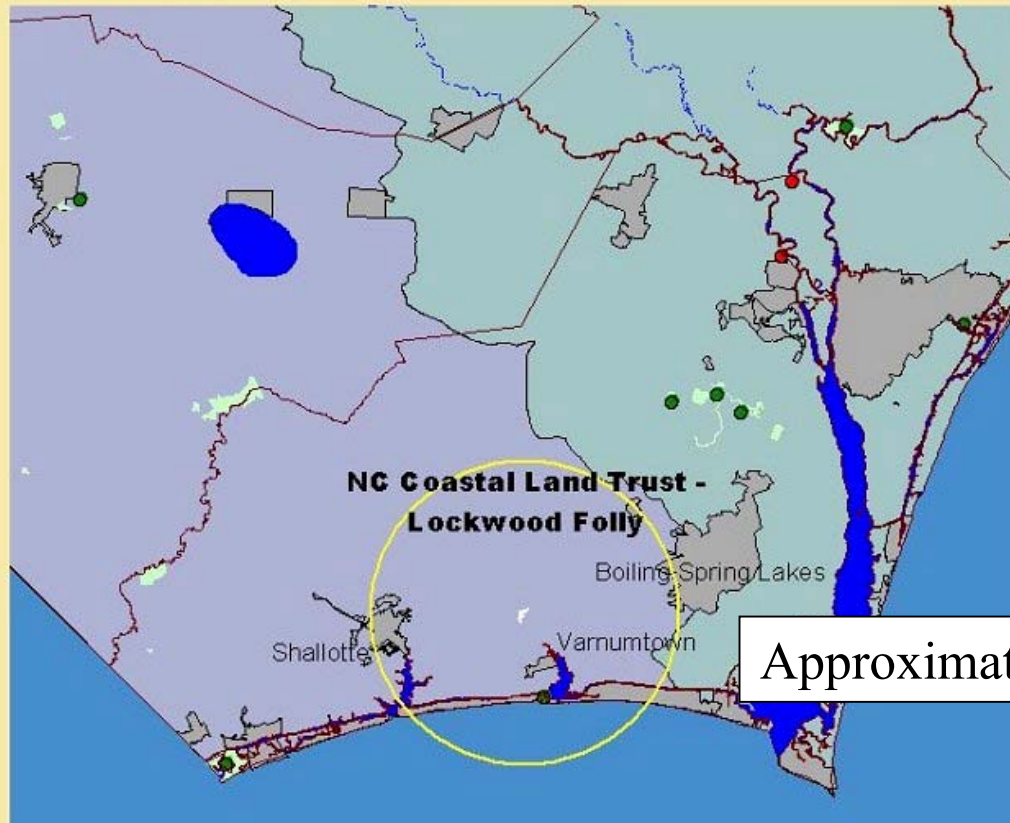
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NC Coastal Land Trust - 2002A-020 Lumber River Basin

Brunswick



- Proposed acquisition
- County boundaries
- Clean Water Management Trust Fund
 - Acquisition-Buffers
 - Acquisition-Greenways
 - Easements
 - Coordinate Public Program
 - Planning
 - Restoration
 - Stormwater
 - Wastewater
- CWMTF properties
- Waterbodies
- Municipal boundaries

Approximately 3946 ft stream

0 20 Miles



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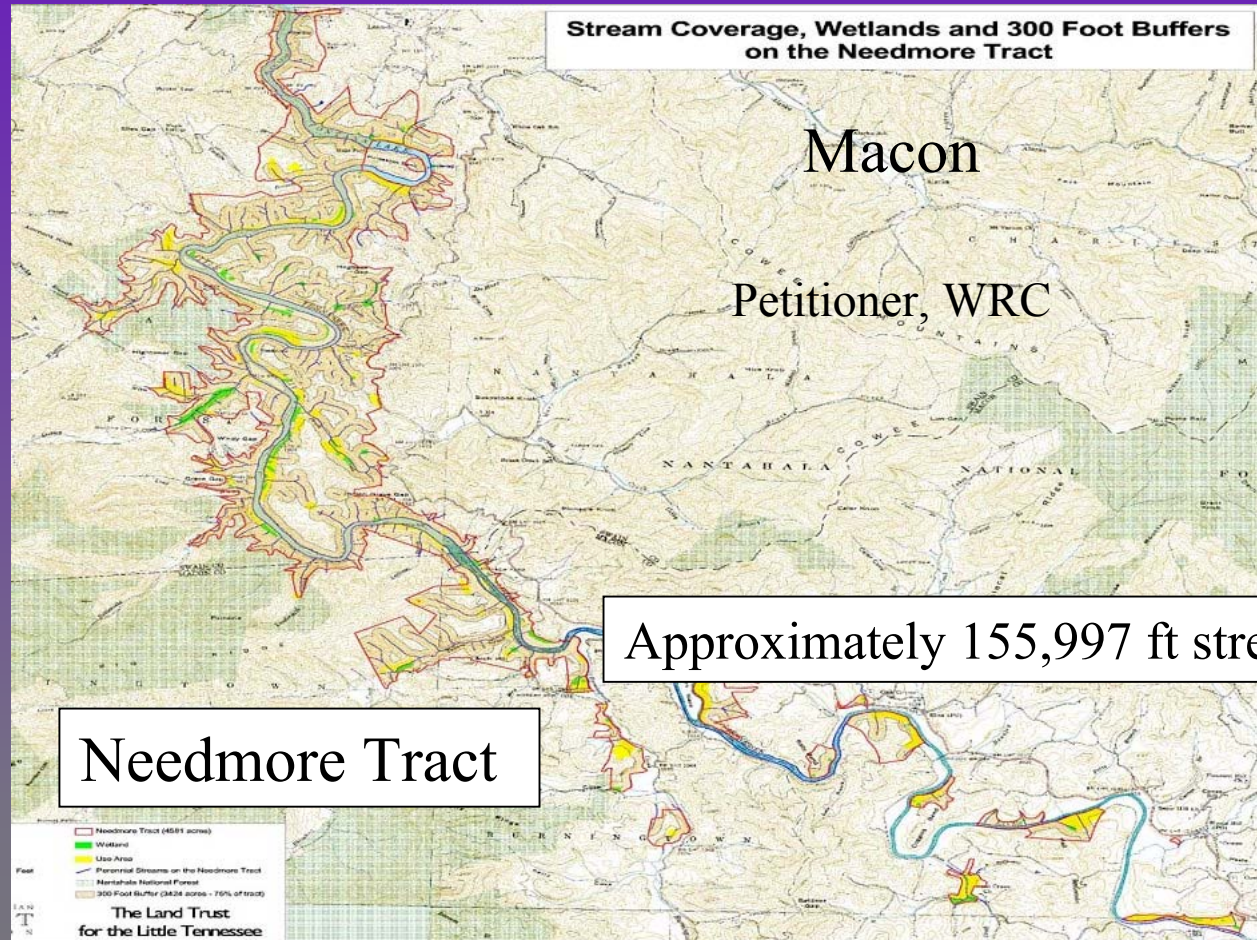


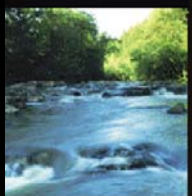
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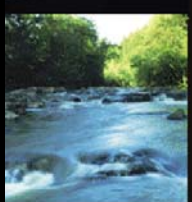
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Preservation Criteria

- Rivers, Streams and Sounds
 - NC Heritage, significant aquatic
 - OR or HQ Waters
 - Shellfish and Primary Nursery
 - DWQ, excellent or good for benthos. . .
 - Water containing rare species
 - Connectivity



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Preservation Criteria

- Wetlands
 - NC Heritage designation as significant
 - DWQ classification as unique
 - Contiguous to presently preserved lands
 - NCDCM, exceptional functional significance
 - Connectivity



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Sources for Preservation

- NC DENR Agencies (1st Priority)
- Clean Water Management Trust Fund
- Natural Heritage Trust Fund
- Private Land Owners and Conservation Groups



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Timing for Preservation

- Discussion of near term actions



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Upcoming BOT Support

- Approval of funds for preservation projects
- Funding associated with MOA



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Questions



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